

as the EITC provision in Senator GRAMM's amendment.

This legislation complements legislation introduced by Reps. McDERMOTT and KLECZKA. Their bill increases the standard deduction for those filing joint returns. The bill I am introducing today and the McDermott/Kleczka bill provide a realistic solution to the marriage penalty that addresses the issues at all income levels.

I urge you to join me in reducing the marriage penalty associated with the EITC. This legislation will help working families who are trying to stay off welfare.

H.R. 3990, THE "ANTI-CRAMMING PROTECTION ACT OF 1998"

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 1998

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 3990, the "Anti-Cramming Protection Act of 1998" to protect the American public from those that perpetrate the unfair and anti-competitive outrage known as "cramming." Crammers are companies that impose phantom charges on customers' telephone bills without their knowledge or consent.

In this information age, consumers are increasingly turning to their telephones not only to communicate with their friends, family, and business associates, but as a device for engaging in electronic commerce. With this legislation, we can ensure that consumers have protections from those who would swindle them simply because they use their telephone.

This legislation entitles consumers to have crammed charges dropped from their telephone bills if they dispute the charges within 90 days of receiving their telephone bill. The bill authorizes State Attorneys General to sue crammers under Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Act to protect consumers in their States from crammers. The bill requires the FTC to write rules to outlaw unfair and deceptive acts and practices in connection with billing for products or services on telephone bills. These rules would ensure that such charges are authorized by the consumer and are easily identifiable on the consumer's telephone bill. Also, subscribers would be permitted to block telephone billing of miscellaneous products and services at their own election. Finally, telephone companies would be authorized to discontinue billing on behalf of known crammers.

Cramming is a spreading problem. Cramming is one of the most frequent sources of consumer complaints at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Moreover, since cramming is a relatively new breed of consumer fraud, existing law is inadequate to provide consumers needed protection. Since the FCC began recording cramming complaints in December, it has processed nearly two thousand complaints. Local telephone companies also have received thousands of complaints, and that number is rising rapidly. Worse, since crammed charges are usually undetected by the consumers who are victimized, many cases go unreported. Without tough legislation, the number of victims is certain to rise, and legitimate competition will be stifled.

How do crammers get away with this trickery? Their creativity is boundless. For exam-

ple, when a consumer dials a number to learn about a product, get sports scores, or hear their horoscope, their home telephone number is often captured through a number identification system. Crammers then use the telephone number to submit bogus charges to the consumer's local telephone company. Worse, crammers are not limited to finding victims through incoming calls. The white pages directory lists their potential prey in alphabetical order. Again, the crammer simply selects telephone numbers at random and submits bogus charges for billing.

Some crammers use names on telephone bills that intend to mislead or confuse the consumer. They will call themselves "F.C.C.," for example, in an attempt to be mistaken for a government agency. Or they will use a name like "Enhanced Services" that may be mistaken for other legitimate charges the consumer has ordered. In addition, there is often a middleman involved that submits billing to the local telephone service provider on behalf of multiple vendors, further complicating matters for consumers who want to dispute a charge. These charges are typically in the \$3 to \$5 range in an attempt to fall below the consumer's radar screen. Of course, these charges add up.

Many more choices are available to consumers today to make purchases of goods and services they want and need. Unfortunately these benefits also create many more opportunities for consumer confusion and fraud. Mr. Speaker, we need tough legislation to stop bad actors who are cramming bogus charges onto our constituents' phone bills. The "Anti-Cramming Protection Act of 1998" provides the tools needed to solve this problem.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JUAN VENÉ

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 1998

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Juan Vené, one of the most knowledgeable and experienced sports reporters and writers about baseball in the history of this sport.

Mr. Vené was honored for his achievements and dedication to writing about baseball by the organization Latino Sports. The banquet dinner in his honor was held at the Grand Hyatt, in New York City, on October 30.

Mr. José Rafael Machado Yanes, better known by his pen name of Juan Vené, was born in Caracas, Venezuela in 1929.

His career as a reporter started in 1947, and since then he has dedicated every single day of his life to his profession as a director, editor, investigative reporter, columnist, sports writer, radio and TV commentator. The Spanish newspaper *El Diario/La Prensa* in New York City has honored him for each of the past 11 years as the most distinguished reporter who writes about the Yankees and the Mets.

Mr. Vené holds the record as the only sports reporter in the United States and Latin America who has covered every World Series for the past 37 years.

He was born with the passion for writing and reporting about the sport of baseball. Mr. Vené went to Cuba in 1948 to study journal-

ism at the School of Marques Sterling, University of Havana, because during those years Venezuela did not have an institution of higher education that taught this field. He graduated from the university in Cuba in 1952. His interest in learning more about journalism motivated him to attend specialized seminars in the field. He also obtained a designation as a historian of baseball and has taught 73 courses on this field.

Mr. Vené writes a daily syndicated column on baseball for numerous newspaper in the United States, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Venezuela. He was a sports commentator for the Voice of America. He is also credited with being the first to launch a Spanish-language radio network to provide detailed coverage of the history of baseball, the training of baseball players, and all the games of the Major Leagues. The program aired in 11 countries.

He has produced many TV shows on baseball including, "Play Ball", "El Mundo en su Marcha", "Los Cuadros del Pueblo", "La Historia del Beisbol", "Magazine", "Juan Vené en Acción". He also belongs to the team of producers and writers of Major League Baseball Productions. Mr. Vené is a member of the Baseball Writer's Association of America and the Society for American Baseball Research. He is married and has four children and one grandchild.

At age 68, Mr. Vené talks about covering baseball with the same excitement and passion that he has demonstrated throughout his life. According to an interview conducted by Bob Shannon, which was published in "New World" in London, when he was asked what he would do next in his life, Mr. Vené responded that he will probably write an encyclopedia on the history of baseball in Latin America and Spain. When he was asked what sports he likes other than baseball, he responded: "As Babe Ruth once said, 'Is there any other sport?'".

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. José Rafael Machado Yanes, writing as Juan Vené, for his great contributions to reporting and recording the history of our beloved national sport—baseball.

GLENN "JEEP" DAVIS

HON. THOMAS C. SAWYER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 1998

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, June 7, 1998, one of Barberton, Ohio's favorite sons will be honored. A statue of Glenn "Jeep" Davis will be unveiled as part of a community-wide celebration of an extraordinary athlete, teacher, and example for us all.

If there is an award in amateur athletics, Glenn "Jeep" Davis has probably won it. If there's a hall of fame, he's probably in it.

Jeep won three Olympic Gold Medals. He took the Olympic Gold in 1956 in the 440y Intermediate Hurdles. His Gold Medal win was no surprise. Earlier in the year during the Olympic trials, Jeep became the first man to break the 50-second barrier in that event. In 1960, he doubled his Gold Medal accomplishment. That year, he defended his Olympic title with a second Gold Medal in the 440y Intermediate Hurdles and went on to win another Gold Medal in the 4x400 Relay.